



Dear Chairperson Gilchrest, Chairperson Lesser, and Members of the Human Services Committee:

I am writing on behalf of the Connecticut Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics in support of HB-6517: An Act Providing Medicaid coverage for Certified, Registered Dietitian-Nutritionist (RDN) Services Providing Medical Nutrition Therapy.

The Connecticut Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics represents nutrition professionals across the state. Our organization is the leading advocate of the dietetic profession in Connecticut, serving the public through the promotion of optimal nutrition, health, and well-being. Our membership includes Registered Dietitian Nutritionists (RDNs), Nutrition and Dietetic Technicians, Registered (NDTRs), students, and retirees of the profession. I am an RDN serving the community of Hartford.

The vulnerable residents of our state who rely on Medicaid face an increased risk for costly nutrition-related chronic diseases, including obesity, diabetes, hypertension, renal disease and high cholesterol. Evidence-based studies affirm that Medical Nutrition Therapy (MNT) by RDNs resulted in improved clinical outcomes and reduced costs related to physician time, medication use, and hospital admissions for individuals with these diseases.

Currently, Medicaid in Connecticut covers expensive and invasive treatment such as bariatric surgery and medication, but lacks coverage for nutrition counseling. Nutrition therapy is a low-cost intervention that treats the root cause of the chronic diseases overwhelming our healthcare system. Additionally, MNT supports quality of life and autonomy by empowering patients to take an active role in preventing and managing disease. Adding nutrition therapy to the routine preventative care toolset for Medicaid patients can improve the overall health and wellbeing of this population while saving thousands in healthcare dollars.

The Connecticut Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics strongly supports HB-6517. Adequate coverage for Medical Nutrition Therapy (MNT) is vital in order to provide high quality and cost-saving care to the Connecticut residents who need it most.

Respectfully,

Allison Kallberg, RDN, CDN

State Policy Representative, Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics

Resident of Southington